

Indonesian Textile Manufacturers Learning More About U.S. Cotton Fiber's Value

Thursday, July 11, 2019 From Cotton Council International

Textile executives representing 20 companies from Indonesia should gain a deeper understanding of why U.S. cotton is the world's preferred fiber when they travel across the U.S. Cotton Belt on July 21-25.

This COTTON USA Special Trade Mission is coordinated by Cotton Council International (CCI), the National Cotton Council's (NCC) export promotions arm.

Indonesia currently is the fifth largest market for U.S. cotton. U.S. export sales to that country are about 1.7 million bales for the 2018-19 marketing year.

The tour's participating companies collectively consume about 2.1 million bales, representing 64 percent of total cotton consumption in Indonesia whose textile mills are expected to import some 3.2 million bales in 2018-19.

CCI President Hank Reichle, a Mississippi cooperative executive, said these tour participants represent an important market for U.S. cotton and we want them to see firsthand U.S. cotton's first-class production and processing operations and efforts on environmental responsibility and continuous improvement, including the new U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol.

"From this tour, these Indonesian textile manufacturers should acquire a better appreciation of U.S. cotton fiber's premium value and how it can make their operations more competitive in the world marketplace," Reichle said. "Our hope is that the multiple face-to-face meetings with U.S. cotton exporters will strengthen relationships with these customers."

The Indonesian delegation will begin its tour in New York with a CCI briefing and an ICE Futures seminar. They will see cotton research in North Carolina and tour the USDA cotton classing office in Bartlett, Tenn., and visit a cotton farm, gin and warehouse in South Texas.

The group also will meet with exporters in the Cotton Belt's four major regions and with these industry organizations: AMCOT, American Cotton Producers, American Cotton Shippers Association, Cotton Incorporated, Lubbock Cotton Exchange, the NCC, Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., Southern Cotton Growers Association, Texas Cotton Association, Western Cotton Shippers Association and Supima.

Our View: Time is Ticking as Farmers Ask Congress to Pass USMCA

Wednesday, July 10, 2019 From Farm Policy Facts

U.S. trade policy is one of the most immediate and pressing issues affecting rural America right now.

Trade has always been a vital part of farm income, and the importance of creating a level playing field for America's farm and ranch families has only grown as the world population expands and demand for high-quality, home-grown American agriculture products rises.

And on the front burner of the U.S. trade agenda is the ratification of the United States-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) agreement that farmers across the heartland are calling on Congress to pass.

Signed in late 2018, the USMCA must be approved by the legislative branches of all three nations before it goes into effect. Last month, Mexico became the first country to do so with an overwhelming 114 to 4 Senate vote in favor of passage.

Meanwhile, in Canada, legislation to approve USMCA has been introduced in parliament, with our northern neighbor expected to pass the legislation in tandem with the U.S. Congress.

However, in the United States, approval has been delayed as Administration officials and Democratic leaders continue to wrangle.

With just 10 legislative working days left before Congress leaves town for the August recess, we are close to letting another window of opportunity slip away.

Worse, if Congress does not approve USMCA before the end of this year, the trade agreement could get caught up in the crossfire of the 2020 presidential campaign and never see passage.

This would be a devastating loss for rural America which is already reeling under the sixth straight year of an agricultural recession.

NAFTA has governed North American trade since 1994. In that time, American agricultural exports to Canada have increased 289 percent and agricultural exports to Mexico have increased by 311 percent, according to the recent testimony of Chief Agricultural Negotiator for the USTR, Gregg Doud, before a House Agricultural Committee Subcommittee.

According to the USDA, roughly 20 percent of our agricultural production is exported into foreign markets.

Canada and Mexico make up nearly 30 percent of these exports. In 2018, out of \$145 billion in agricultural exports, Mexico and Canada accounted for \$41 billion worth of exports.

And the USTR estimates that food and agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico support more than 325,000 American jobs.

USMCA was negotiated to maintain this record of success for U.S. agriculture while building upon it, offering new market opportunities to help improve farm gate prices and lift agriculture out of recession. ("COTTON NEWS" continued on Page 2)

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Farm Policy Facts recently spoke with John Gilliland, one of America's top trade attorneys specializing in agriculture, who emphasized that expanding trade opportunities is equal to investing in our communities.

"Agricultural exports are really important to vast swaths of our country," Gilliland says. "The importance of trade is felt throughout not only our rural economy but the urban communities as well that rely on the jobs provided by the agriculture and food industries."

Approval of USMCA will strengthen our trading relationships with Mexico and Canada, resulting in job growth and economic benefits for rural America at a time when our nation's farm and ranch families need it most.

Ambassador Doud emphasized the importance of this trade agreement in his recent congressional testimony, saying that "passage of the United States – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA) is an absolute necessity for U.S. agriculture."

The clock is ticking. It's time to pass USMCA.

EPA Approves Sulfoxaflor Use on Cotton

Friday, July 12, 2019

From the National Cotton Council

The National Cotton Council (NCC) is grateful for EPA's decision granting use on cotton of sulfoxaflor (commercially known as Transform®) – a uniquely designed insecticide that targets piercing/sucking insect pests such as aphids and plant bugs.

"We appreciate EPA's decision to make sulfoxaflor available for use on cotton," said NCC Chairman Mike Tate, an Alabama cotton producer. "EPA has been diligent in requesting new studies of sulfoxaflor use on cotton and other crops that provided additional data for the agency's scientific review per court order. The NCC will continue to engage EPA on crop protection product registrations and other regulatory matters that affect the efficient production of cotton."

Cotton was originally included on sulfoxaflor's Section 3 label. However, an appellate court ruling in November 2015 vacated the registration of the product for all crops until additional studies and data review could be conducted based on an alleged risk to bees. After additional review, EPA issued a new registration for sulfoxaflor in 2016 for some earlier approved crops, but that registration did not include cotton.

Since 2016, EPA has reviewed data from additional studies of use on cotton and other crops. The NCC submitted comments to EPA's proposed registration decision for sulfoxaflor in which it stated that sulfoxaflor was part of a new insecticide class that was safer for bees and other pollinators. Specifically, the NCC urged EPA to consider that there is no supporting documentation for the position that if cotton blooms are present, honey bees are present – especially not at enough densities to present bee colony loss.

EPA has noted that sulfoxaflor is safer for bees and other pollinators and works against pests that are becoming resistant to other classes of plant protection chemistries. The agency also noted that sulfoxaflor, with its unique mode of action, is a valuable Integrated Pest Management tool for combatting pesticide resistance, a point that the NCC made in its comment submission.

Want the facts about the U.S. agriculture and farm policy?

<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

Texas High Plains Cotton: Keep Watch on the Fleahoppers

Friday, July 12, 2019

By Dr. Suhas Vyavhare

This is just a heads up that there have been a few reports of cotton fleahoppers in cotton. Cotton fleahopper adults are pale green to gray-green; nymphs are lighter-colored with reddish eyes. Fleahoppers prefer to feed on small squares (pinhead size) and can cause substantial square loss if present in enough numbers. When scouting for fleahoppers, pay attention to both number of insects in field and the percent square retention especially during the first three weeks of squaring. They typically don't target large (> matchhead size) squares. Thus, they are normally concentrated in the top few nodes of the plant. Scout by visually inspecting plant terminals, the top three nodes. Adults are active flyers, but nymphs can be spotted when observed carefully.

Here is a link to a video on how to scout for fleahoppers in cotton. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epVctkRkTHs>

Use an economic threshold of 25-30 cotton fleahoppers per 100 terminals to determine when treatment is needed. After, first bloom, fleahopper control is rarely justified. Avoid using broad-spectrum insecticides as they can negatively impact beneficial insect populations and cause outbreaks of aphids and bollworms. Additional information on cotton fleahopper management can be found at:

https://agrilifecdn.tamu.edu/lubbock/files/2017/06/Cotton-fleahopper_ENTO073.pdf

<https://lubbock.tamu.edu/files/2019/04/ENTO-075-2019.pdf>

FYI – I am also seeing some black fleahoppers in cotton. There isn't much information available about their impact on cotton—include them along with cotton fleahopper counts and base your treatment decisions taking into account the number of insects present and percent square loss.

Lygus bug numbers have remained sparse so far. But there have been scattered reports of treatment level infestations of lygus bug in few fields. Be alert for lygus but do not confuse other harmless true bugs for it.

Dr. Suhas Vyavhare is the Cotton Entomologist for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Lubbock. This article originally was posted at <https://focusonagriculture.blogspot.com/2019/07/texas-high-plains-cotton-keep-watch-on.html>

Editor's Note:

"Cotton News", a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 41-county High Plains area, is mailed from Lubbock each Friday. Its contents are confined to news items and comments pertaining to the High Plains cotton industry which is so vital to U.S. all. Anyone interested in making comments about the contents of this column can call 806-792-4904 or Email PCG at: editor@plainscotton.org